

U.S. Department
of Transportation

United States
Coast Guard



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16711

15 October 1998

From: Commander, Eighth Coast Guard District
To: Distribution

Subj: OIL SPILL RESPONSE BARGE CERTIFICATES OF INSPECTION

1. Enclosure (1) is forwarded for your information and use.


G. A. TETREAU
By direction

Encl: (1) G-MOC Policy Ltr No. 6-98 of 28 Sep 98

Dist: All Eighth District MSOs



16711
MOC Policy Ltr
No.6-98

SEP 28 1998

From: Commandant

To: Distribution

Subj: OIL SPILL RESPONSE BARGE CERTIFICATES OF INSPECTION

1. PURPOSE. The purpose of this Policy letter is to clarify the manning levels and operating conditions for barges which are employed as designated Oil Spill Response Vessels (OSRVs). Enclosure (1) of this letter is a draft change to the Marine Safety Manual, Volume III, Chapter 21.

2. BACKGROUND. Many high volume petroleum ports have an oil spill response company or companies with equipment readily available for use during an oil spill. In an effort to meet growing customer and regulatory needs, many of these companies have changed the service of existing tank barges to Oil Spill Recovery Vessels. These oil recovery barges are located in various OCMI zones throughout the country and the Certificates of Inspection vary from port to port. This office recognizes the need to standardize manning and operating restrictions to eliminate the confusion from port to port.

3. DISCUSSION. The Coast Guard Authorization Act of 1996 (hereafter referred to as the Act) relieved OSRVs from tank vessel requirements. It specifically designated OSRVs as a specific class of vessel and directed the Coast Guard to promulgate regulations governing their construction, inspection and manning. The Coast Guard has an ongoing project to draft these regulations. However, the need for guidance on these vessels remains and until such time as the regulatory project is complete, this office will work with industry and provide guidance through policy letters and NVICs.

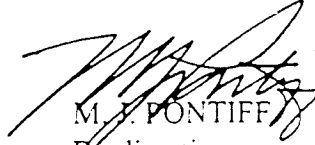
4. IMPLEMENTATION.

a. All OCMI's shall take Enclosure (1) of this letter for action, as applicable to vessels in their AOR.

b. Copies of Enclosure (1) shall be incorporated into the next change of MSM Volume III, Chapter 21.

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5. ACTION. This policy guidance is effective immediately and will be cancelled upon completion of a future rulemaking project to create regulations governing OSRVs.


M. J. PONTIFF
By direction

Encl: (1) Draft change to Marine Safety Manual, Volume III

Dist: All G-M Division Offices
All District (m) Offices

Marine Safety School
Marine Safety Center

21.M.4. Oil Spill Response Barges (OSRBs).

a. Manning. Title 46, United States Code, Chapter 87 allows the Secretary to prescribe the individuals serving on board an OSRV (including an OSRB), who must hold a merchant mariner's document (MMD). Some OSRBs have been outfitted with skimming equipment having the capability to recover and store recovered oily liquids in bulk. This necessitates placing persons onboard the vessel for the operation of the barge's machinery/equipment. These persons are in addition to those persons who engage in the navigation and safety of the vessel, and are part of the vessel's routine underway operations or exert operational control of the vessel during its oil recovery operations. Only those persons who engage in the navigation and safety of the vessel or exert operational control of the vessel or its operations are required to hold a valid merchant mariner's document (e.g., ABs, lifeboatman, watchman, tankerman). The number of persons required is determined by the cognizant Officer-in-Charge, Marine Inspection using the policy found in this section. When the vessel is in operation for training exercises and drills, and the evolution is less than 12 hours in duration, the persons associated with the safe operation of the vessel may be reduced.

1. AB's and Ordinary Seaman. At least 65 percent of the unlicensed deck crew on seagoing vessels over 100 gross tons must hold endorsements for AB. The alternatives for ABs as found in the provision of 21.M.3.b. may be employed by the OCMI. The OCMI must consider the vessel's operation, work hour considerations and prevailing weather conditions when determining the proper number of deck crew.

2. Watchmen. When the OSRB is outfitted with crew shelters/quarters and industrial workers have access to the vessel, a suitable number of watchmen shall be provided but will not be less than two.

3. Certificated Lifeboatmen. The number of certificated lifeboatmen must be separately stated on the COI. This number will vary depending on the lifeboat and life raft requirements for each vessel, in accordance with the regulations.

4. Tankermen Persons-In-Charge. When required (by paragraph 21.M.4.g), these crewmembers shall be separate from the deck crew in order to comply with the workhour limitations. The vessel's COI should reflect this condition of operation.

b. Crew Quarters and Shelters. The construction and structural fire protection standards or accommodations should meet the requirements found in 46 CFR, Subchapter L, Part 127.270 (a) – (d) and the applicable requirements of 46 CFR, Subchapter J.

c. Persons in Addition to the Crew (PACs). To sustain operations during an oil spill response, workers will be present aboard the OSRB specifically to operate oil recovery equipment, or in maintenance or support activity, but will not necessarily be

ENCLOSURE

involved in the navigation or safety aspects of operating the vessel. These workers are industrial workers and are not required to hold an MMD as they are on board the vessel for the sole purpose of carrying out the industrial business or function of the vessel.

d. Total Persons Allowed. For response operations, training purposes and drills, the total persons carried shall be determined by the OCMI but may not exceed the total capacity of primary lifesaving equipment on board the vessel, nor shall they adversely impact the vessel's stability.

e. Transit to the Training/Response Site. Unless the barge is specifically designed and constructed for the carriage of personnel, the following applies: On all voyages beyond twelve (12) miles from shore, all persons shall be transported on the attending vessel (see below) and transferred to the OSRB upon arrival at the training/response site. All personnel transfers shall be conducted when the attending vessel master deems conditions are safe. Adequate primary lifesaving equipment shall be on board the attending vessel for all persons carried. The OSRB will provide no overnight accommodations for the PACs, unless the provisions in paragraph 21.M.4.b. are met.

f. Attending Vessel. When the OSRB is underway with persons onboard, engaged in oil spill operations, drills, or training exercises, a vessel must be in attendance at all times. The attending vessel must be capable of receiving all persons aboard in the event of an emergency evacuation, and shall be equipped as a standby vessel in accordance with 33 CFR 143.405. The attending vessel does not have to meet the multiple propellers or propulsion devices requirement of 33 CFR 143.405 provided the vessel can demonstrate it has adequate maneuvering capabilities.

g. Lightering and Discharges to Shoreside Reception Facility. An OSRB is generally a tank barge that changed service to Oil Spill Recovery Barge. During an oil spill response, it is likely that these barges may be employed as lightering barges, receiving recovered oil from other oil recovery vessels and then discharging their cargo to a shore facility. The person-in-charge of all oily liquid transfers shall have a tankerman endorsement for the grade(s) of cargo transferred that is appropriate for the vessel. A restricted tankerman endorsement in accordance with 46 CFR 13.111 is acceptable for these vessels. When engaged in lightering or oily liquid transfers, a minimum of two (2) persons-in-charge shall be on board the vessel. When lightering transfer operations are less than 12 hours in duration only one person-in-charge is required. The persons-in-charge are only required during transfer operations and not for recovering oil. This requirement is an operational restriction and should be placed in the operating details of the COI. The following verbiage shall be used on the OSRB COI:

“WHEN TRANSFERRING RECOVERED OILY LIQUIDS OR OIL TO OR FROM ANOTHER VESSEL OR FACILITY, A TANKERMAN-PERSON-IN-CHARGE SHALL BE PROVIDED.”